The Myrtle.

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13

UNIVERSALIST PUBLISHING HOUSE.

VOL. XXI. BOSTON, JANUARY 6, 1872 NO. 36.

For the Myrtle.

The Factory Child's Lament.

'T was on a New Year's morning,
Not many months ago,
A group of ill-clad children
Were toiling through the snow.

They heeded not the blinding storm
But bravely went their way,
And in the factory they toiled
Through all the livelong day.

No happy greetings passed their lips,
That bliss might crown the year,
Grim want was ever at their door,
And chilled their hearts with fear.

"Yes, we must work or we must starve,"
Anna to Dora said;
"Our father is a drunkard now
And will not find us bread.

"While other girls can go to school,
And sing, and dance, and play,
Like birds within a wiry cage
We waste our lives away.

"While living in our country home,
I daily went to school,
And there our teacher often spoke
About the Golden Rule.

"I wonder if the gentle folks
Who live on yonder hill,
E'er think upon the blighted lives
Of children in the mill!

"And then the grocer, where we trade,
(Where father gets his rum),
Oh! little does he think or care
About our wretched home!

"No law restrains his greedy hand
From setting of the snare,
Which tempts the thoughtless and the weak,
To ruin and despair.

"His daughter scorns us when we meet,
And flaunts her golden curls,
Because our father is a sot,
And we but factory girls."

Just then they passed the grocer's house
A mansion fair to see;
Builded and garnished with the gold
Gained in iniquity.

The grocer's daughter sat within
A warm and pleasant room,
Adorned with choicest works of art,
And plants of sweet perfume.

* * * * * * *

Friends of humanity, attend!
List to the children's cry,
Shut up within the factory walls
As weary years go by.

Justice demands their swift release.
And mercy pleads in vain,
E'en now the blood of innocents
Does all your garments stain.

A. S. T.

For the Myrtle.

Little Franz' Christmas.

'T was Christmas eve. All day long the snow had been softly falling, falling on every thing great and small, making the earth look beautiful. And now the night had come, and the stars shone out calmly from the clear, blue sky, just as they did on a night many hundred years ago when a Saviour was born bringing happiness to all little children since that time by giving them the beautiful Christmas.

"I am glad it is Christmas," said little Franz to himself, as he sat down on one of the great stone steps of the old cathedral. He rested his head against a pillar and looked up into the sky. Far above him the cathedral bells chimed

out merrily, and as Franz listened he forgot all about how tired he was from wandering about all day with the little violin, he even forgot how rich he felt over the few hard earned pennies with which he meant to buy some rolls for his grandfather's breakfast Christmas morning, indeed, he forgot everything except that it was Christmas.

He clapped his hands softly, and said again, "Oh yes, I am glad it is Christmas, for I have asked the little Christ-child to give me a beautiful gift, and he will give it to me. Then he fell to dreaming about what it would be, and while he was dreaming the doors of the cathedral were thrown open, and the warm bright light streamed forth from within, and the grand tones of the organ pealed out upon the air. Many children came up the steps and passed within the doors. Little Franz rose and went in too with the others; he followed them up the long aisle until they came in front of the altar where they all stood still; the many voices of the organ were hushed, and the great master rose from his seat and faced the children. He smiled and the children smiled back, then, at a signal, out rang the voices of the children in the words the angels sang at Bethlehem, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men," and above them all rose the voice of little Franz sweet and clear.

The master looked at him; he saw a poorly dressed child hugging a little violin; but this was not all. He saw that though little Franz's eyes were fixed upon himself, little Franz's thoughts were far away, and indeed it was so, for Franz was thinking only of his angel mother, who, only one Christmas ago, had sung to him the same sweet words, and he felt sure that she was listening in heaven to him now, and he put his whole soul into his song.

At length it was finished and the children slowly passed up the aisle. The master came down the steps and took Franz by the hand, and said, "What do they call you, little friend?"

"Franz," the child replied.

"Do you love music, Franz?" asked the master.

"Very much," answered Franz.

"Play me something," said the master, smiling.

Franz looked up and lost his fears in the kind smile, then, taking his little violin from under his arm, he laid his cheek lovingly against it and began to play, so low and sweet then so full and loud that the master would smile, and while he was smiling the tears would fall from his eyes. When he had finished, the master said,

"Well done, little Franz, *great* Franz."

Then he asked him to come again to-morrow. Franz promised, and they went out of the cathedral hand in hand, and the good master walked all the way home with Franz, talking with him the while, and Franz told him of the Christmas gift the little Christ-child was going to give him.

"Are you sure of it, little Franz?" asked the master.

"Very sure," replied Franz.

"I am sure of it too," said the master.

They said good-night, and Franz went up the old crazy stairs into his little attic room with a light heart. He told his grandfather all about the good master, and the old man said, "God keep thee, little Franz." And Franz slept very soundly that night.

In the morning he rose early and went out softly to get the fresh rolls for breakfast. As he came in his grandfather met him at the door, and said:

"See, little Franz, what the Christ-child has sent thee." And Franz saw a most beautiful little violin, just what he wished for more than anything else in the world.

Franz laughed, and danced, and sung, he was nearly beside himself with joy. Then his grandfather said, "Thou hast not thanked the little Christ-child, Franz."

So Franz knelt down and gave thanks for his beautiful Christmas gift. As he rose from his knees, he asked, "Who brought the gift here, grandfather?"

"I brought you the gift, little Franz," said the good master, whom Franz had not noticed before. "The little Christ-child put it into my mind to bring it to you."

"Then," said Franz, "the little Christ-child has given me another gift, for he has given me you to be my friend."

"Yes, I am your friend," said the master, and now will you try your new gift?"

Franz took the new violin up reverently, and played so joyfully and at the same time ir was so sadly sweet, that it brought tears and smiles to the faces of the grandfather and the master. When he had finished, the good master placed his hand on little Franz's head, and said to him again:

"Well done, little Franz, *great* Franz." And Franz was very happy.

He went to the cathedral with the good master and sung with the other children, and thought it was the happiest day he had ever spent. After this day, the good master took Franz under his care, and he and his grandfather were soon above want. Franz grew up to be a great master of music, greater even than the good master who taught him, and all the world loved him for the grand, beautiful music which he wrote, and people called him the *great* Franz. But with all his greatness, Franz never forgot this happy Christmas day and the two beautiful presents the little Christ-child sent him.

M. C. Schouler.

Johnny's Opinion of Grandmothers.

GRANDMOTHERS are very nice folks;
They beat all the aunts in creation;
They let a chap do as he likes,
And don't worry about education.

I'm sure I can't see it at all,
What a poor fellow ever could do
For apples, and pennies, and cakes,
Without a grandmother or two.

Grandmothers speak softly to "ma's,"
To let a boy have a good time;
Sometimes they will whisper, 'ts true,
'Tother way, when a boy wants to climb.

Grandmothers have muffins for tea,
And pies, a whole row, in the cellar,
And they're apt (if they know it in time)
To make chicken pies for a "feller."

And if he is bad now and then,
And makes a great racketing noise,
They only look over their specs,
And say, "Ah, these boys will be boys,

Life is only so short at the best:—
Let the children be happy to-day."
Then they look for awhile at the sky,
And the hills that are far, far away.

Quite often, as twilight comes on,
Grandmothers sing hymns, very low,
To themselves, as they rock by the fire,
About heaven, and when they shall go.

And then, a boy stopping to think,
Will find a hot tear in his eye,
To know what will come at the last;
For grandmothers all have to die.

I wish they could stay here and pray,
For a boy needs their prayers ev'ry night;
Some boys more than others, I s'pose;
Such as I need a wonderful sight.

Little Sower.

The True Secret.

Some time since, at the house where I was staying, there were two little sisters, whom nobody could see without loving, for they were always happy together. They had the same books and the same playthings, but never a quarrel sprang up between them,—no cross words, no pouts, no slaps, no running away in a pet. On the green before the door, trundling hoop, playing with Rover the dog, or helping mother, they were always the same sweet-tempered little girls.

"You never seem to quarrel," I said to them, one day. "How is it you are alwas so happy together?"

Tney looked up, and the eldest answered, "I s'pose 'tis 'cause Addie *lets me* and *I let* Addie."

I thought a moment. Ah, that is it!" I said. "She lets you, and you let her: that's it."

Dear young friends, did you ever think what an apple of discord "not letting" is? Even now, while I have been writing, a great crying was heard under the window. I looked out.

"Gerty, what is the matter?"

"Mary won't let me have her ball!" bellows the enraged Gerty.

"Well, Gerty wouldn't lend me her pencil in school," cried Mary, "and I don't want her to have my ball."

"Fie, fie! is that the way sisters should treat eaoh other?"

"She shan't have my pencil!" muttered Gerty. "She'll only lose it."

"And you'll only lose my ball!" retorted Mary, "and I shan't let you have it."

But these little girls, Addie and her sister, have got the true secret of good manners. Addie lets Rose, and Rose lets Addie. They are yielding. kind, unselfish, and always ready to oblige each other. And are they not happy? Oh, yes; and do you not love them already?

Let all my little readers try to be like them.

A LITTLE girl about nine years old, the daughter of a clergyman, was visiting in a family where the father did not pray, but was in the habit of reading a chapter in the Bible with his family. At night, when he had read the chapter, the little girl knelt down as she had been in the habit of doing. The father saw the child on her knees and knelt himself. The rest of the family followed, and soon the father prayed for the first time in his family. That little girl was the instrument of the first family prayer.

A Winter Song.

THE north wind doth blow, and we shall have snow,
And what will the robin do then, poor thing?
He'll sit in a barn,
And keep himself warm,
And hide his head under his wing, poor thing.

The north wind doth blow, and we shall have snow,
And what will the swallow do then, poor thing?
O! do not you know?
He's gone long ago,
To a country much warmer than ours, poor thing.

The north wind doth blow, and we shall have snow,
And what will the honey-bee do, poor thing?
In his hive he will stay,
Till the cold's pass'd away,
And then he'll come out in the spring, poor thing.

The north wind doth blow, and we shall have snow,
And what will the children do then, poor things?
When lessons are done,
They'll jump, skip, and run,
And play till they make themselves warm, poor things.

For the Myrtle.

Twins.

SUSIE DALE was eight years old and had never had a doll. That seems a strange thing to tell, but Susie lived on the prairie, not only far from city toy-stores, but some miles from a country village store. Therefore her toys were few, except such as were home-made. Her brother made her little chairs and tables and whatever he could whittle out with his knife, and she had broken dishes for a tea-set, and her mother made her rag-dolls, but a real China doll she had never owned. Indeed, she had seen only two or three when she had been on visits to her little friends, and she thought them the most wonderful things ever made. To own a real doll, herself, was almost more happiness than she dared hope for.

A little before her eighth Christmas, her mother was reading her a story from the children's corner of the newspaper, about a little girl who went to the chimney and told Santa Claus what she wanted. "A tea-set, please, Santa C'aus, a 'ittle tart an horses, Santa C'aus," the child would go and shout up chimney, and then run, a little afraid of the thing she was shouting to. The story did not tell whether the things came, but Susie and her mother both laughed at the thought of shouting up the chimney for them.

However, Susie thought all to herself that she would try it. So when she was in the room alone she put her lttle head down by the chimney and shouted, "A doll, please, Santa Claus," and it echoed and repeated itself so loud that she thought Santa Claus himself must have heard, and she herself was frightened and ran away.

Now whether Santa Claus heard or not I know not. But that this happened, I do know.

Her aunt Susie Baxter, a lively lady who lived in Boston, was out buying Christmas gifts, and she said to herself, "Now what shall I buy for niece Susie, I wonder?" She was just going by Salom's, and saw a whole window full of dolls. "Let's see, did I ever send her a doll? No, I've always sent her books, she's so far away. I'll get a doll I can mail in a box, and send that for a change." So the doll was bought and dressed, boxed and sent, in good season for Christmas.

And her aunt Sophie Dale in Ohio, went to the Sewing Circle fair and drew a pretty white-dressed doll, for which she had bought a little ticket on shares, of a child as pretty as the doll. She had no children of her own, so she hardly knew at first what to do with the doll. She thought she would give it back to the child to sell over again, but the little one looked tired, and evidently was glad to see the last of it. Finally she thought, "I'll send it to brother Robert's Susie. No doubt she has dolls enough, but she'll like to be remembered on Christmas, and I've never sent her anything." So the doll went on its way.

"I wonder if Santa Claus has brought me anything," thought Susie, creeping out of bed before light, not daring to shout "Merry Christmas" to anybody yet, it was so early. Her stocking hung in the kitchen, close by the chimney. She could see it shining out white in the dim light. Yes, there was something in it,—and

something under it, too. A doll standing straight up inside, and a doll hanging by the neck under it! She shouted "oh! oh! oh!" so loud that the whole house heard her and called "Merry Christmas" before she thought of it.

Her father and mother knew nothing about it. She found all their little gifts in the other stocking, hung the other side of the chimney. But brother Ben took pity on her curiosity and explained. He had been to the office the night before and got both the boxes. These he now gave her, with their lining of soft paper and pink wool. But he couldn't deny himself the surprise. So he kept them till all the rest were abed, then undid the boxes, and took out the twin dolls, and put them up in that boy-fashion for Susie to find. In the boxes she found pretty letters from both aunties, wishing her merry Christmas and sending her lots of love.

"Just think, mamma," said Susie, "I wanted a doll so much, more than anything else, but I didn't think I'd get *twins*. Santa Claus must have heard twice over, it echoed so."

Her mother didn't understand till Susie told her how she shouted up the chimney.

"Somebody must have heard, I think," said her mother. *H. A. B.*

Jim's Light.

"I say, Jim, didn't you feel mad this noon, when mother kept us waiting half an hour for our dinner?"

"Well, Harry, I was a little restive at first, for I was as hungry as an alligator; but I held my light to my feet and kept quiet."

"Your light! Pray what's that?" inquired Harry, eagerly.

"God's word, to be sure," replied Jim. "Haven't you read that 'the commandment is a lamp, and the law is a light'? Now, when I felt restive, I thought of these words: 'The patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit;' so I prayed for help to curb my temper. And I think I enjoyed my dinner, when it came, better than you did Harry; eh?"

Harry was a frank fellow, and replied that he guessed it was so. I hope he took his friend's light; but, if he did not, I trust *you* will.

THE VOICE of God calling his little flock into the path of virtue, is but the whisper of angels.

A Girl's Thoughts at Twenty.

GIRLHOOD'S sunny days are over
With to-day;
They, with all their wayward brightness
Pass away;
Woman's earnest path before me
Lieth straight;
Who can tell what grief and anguish
These await

Guide me, Father, God of Mercy,
On the way;
Never from Thy holy guidance
Let me stray;
Give that meed of joy or sorrow
Pleaseth Thee,
Whatso'er Thy will ordaineth
Best for me.

In the shadow and the darkness
Be my star;
In the light, lest radiance dazzle,
Go not far;
Make me patient, kind, and gentle,
Day by day;
Teach me how to live more nearly
As I pray.

That my heart so much desireth,
Grant me still,
If that earnest hope accordeth
With Thy will;
Should Thy mercy quite withhold it,
Be Thou near;
Let me feel I hold its promise
All too dear.

Here, upon life's very threshold,
Take my heart;
From Thy holy guidance let it
Ne'er depart.
When life's stormy strife is over,
Take me home,
There to be more fully, truly,
Thine alone.

Crooked Habits.

While shaking hands with an old man, the other day, we noticed that some of his fingers were quite bent inward, and he had not the power of straightening them. Alluding to this fact, he said:

"In these crooked fingers there is a good text for a talk to children. For over fifty years I used to drive a stage, and these bent fingers show the effect of holding the reins for so many years."

This is the text. Is it not a suggestive one? Does it not teach us how oft-repeated acts become a habit, which, once acquired, remains generally through life?

"EVERY light has its shadows."

Our Sunday Schools.

CHRISTMAS AT OXFORD.

The Universalist Sunday School in Oxford held a Festival in honor of the Saviour's birth, in their church, on the evening of the 25th inst. The exercises, which were witnessed and evidently much enjoyed by a full house, consisted of speaking and singing by the members of the school, and addresses by the pastor and superintendent, and a quartette by the choir.

While these exercises were progressing, that mysterious friend and favorite of the children, Santa Claus, made his appearance, personated by the superintendent, Bro. Cornelius Putnam, to the infinite delight of the children, and no small amusement of the adults. He was in the best of humor, and made his visit very agreeable to all present.

After he had retired, it was found that two trees were loaded with various articles, useful and ornamental, for the members of the school and others. For the pastor and family, among other things, the trees bore a ten-pound turkey, which will help essentially to make the Christmas holidays a season of festive enjoyment to them. *W. W. W.*

AT THE HIGHLANDS.

—The Roxbury Sunday School celebrated the anniversary of the Saviour's advent on Christmas eve, Dec. 24th, by a concert in the church. The Union Mission School in the eastern portion of the Highland district united with them in the services and the house was well filled with children had there been no listeners, but as it was the house, body and galleries was crowded with an interested throng. The exercises, consisting of singing, recitations, and speeches, were very interesting and enjoyable.

On Monday eve the school again assembled at the vestry for the more festive part of the Christmas occasion. The vestry was elaboratcly decorated, as usual, and was very beautiful with festoons, mottoes, stars and wreaths, and the children to the number of three or four hundred, filled the vestry. A fine collation was served them at an early hour, and the evening was passed in joyous festivities. A handsome present was made to the sexton of the church, by the school.

AT SCHOOL STREET.

—A very pleasant entertainment was given Christmas night in the vestry of School Street Church. While it was principally intended for the gratification of the Sabbath School pupils, a general invitation was extended to the parish, and a very large crowd assembled. Misses Field and Jacobs presided at the piano in the early part of the entertainment. An old folks' and a young folks' concert followed. The Christmas trees were handsomely lighted, and from their boughs were taken over three hundred presents—one for every scholar in tne school. The distribution created much merriment, and at its conclusion a farce, written by Mr. George M. Baker, was performed by members of the school. Refreshments were served to all, and the affair terminated at a seasonable hour. During the evening the faithful sexton of the church, Mr. Jackson, was made the recipient of a couple of valvaluable books. The entertainment was of a very enjoyable character throughout, and was under the management of Mr. R. G. Norris, Mr. and Mrs. Mayhew, Mr. F. K. Kingman, and Misses S. Knowles, E. E. Marble and M. A. Mellen.

"I Went Right On."

We have heard a good story of a little Sabbath School girl who took a very deep interest in her lessons, and had them ready for recitation every Sunday. The lessons consisted of portions of the Scriptures on a card given to each scholar. The little girl of whom we speak always had her lessons perfectly. But one Sunday she lost her ticket or card on which the chapter and verses were printed, and what could she do? Perhaps some young reader may suppose that she made this an excuse to neglect her lesson. Not at all. When asked by her teacher where she commenced, she replied:

"I lost my ticket, and so I went right on, and finished the chaptcr."

What a good lesson she had, and what a good lesson she has given to all our young Sabbath School folks! Whenever you are tempted to make an excuse for neglecting your duty, resist the temptation, and persevere in your work. Remember the instance of the devoted and resolute little scholar, who, instead of missing a good lesson because her ticket was lost, "went right on."

New School.

The following letter speaks for itself. We trust every reader of the MYRTLE will read it, and take the case of this new western school to heart.

SMITHLAND, IOWA, Dec. 17, 1871.

Dear Myrtle:—I seat myself to state our situation, trusting that my letter will reach some one who will take sufficient interest in us to proffer a few words of advice. I am a Vermonter, came west three years since, and have been in this locality most of the time since. The people here are a mixed class of no particular religious bias. A young man by the name of B. G. Loucks, and myself, have succeeded in raising a Sunday School interest, and as we are Universalists in faith, we are, of course, doing our best. But we need advice and books to aid us, as we are both young and inexperienced. The people here are pure, true Westerners, generous to the core, simple and earnest in religious views. There is no preacher in this section of the country to whom we can apply, and as now is the time and this the place for work, we have made bold to write as we have to you.

H. W. Scribner.

Spartan and Christian Parents.

At the annual festival of the goddess Diana, at Sparta, it was the custom to produce all the children of the republic beside the altar, and to whip them till their blood streamed on it. The fathers and mothers were present, and exhorted them to bear it without crying or seeming to feel pain. How different is the Christian parent's duty, who brings the young to the Goo Shepherd, who carries the Lambs in his bosom, and leeds his flocks beside the still waters. Can we be too thankful for the light of the Gospel?

———Is not God as good as man can be? What man would doom another to endless suffering, realizing what he was doing? We read of the worst of men who have been very merciful to poor and weak and suffering persons who have come in their way. Will not the infinitely gracious God have compassion on his needy children? Will he not bring them all to him at last? He has the love for them which would prompt him to do this. He has the power to confer this good upon them.

———"Father, what should you like best to have?" asked a little fellow.

"A good son," was the reply.

Life of the Saviour.

LESSON LXVIII

THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

"I will have mercy and not sacrifice."

SCRIPTURE, — Luke x. 25–37.

Question. — What question did a lawyer ask Jesus?

Answer. — Luke x. 25.

NOTE. A lawyer was a teacher of the law. This one seems to have come to Jesus in a self-righteous spirit, to see what Jesus could teach him who knew so much already. And the word tempted may be rendered tried. He seems to have expected that the Saviour would instruct him to do some great deed.

Q. — What did Jesus say in reply?

A. — Luke x. 26.

NOTE. Jesus turned him to the law which he assumed to know so well, and asked him the purport of the law.

Q. — What was the lawyer's reply?

A. — Luke x. 27.

Q. — Did Jesus assure him that he should have eternal life by keeping these commandments?

A. — Luke x. 28.

Q. — What question did the lawyer immediately ask?

A. — Luke x. 29.

Q. — By what parable did Jesus define the meaning of neighbor?

A. — Luke x. 30.

NOTE Jericho was nearly nineteen miles from Jerusalem, and was situated much lower. The tribe of Levi was set apart to the priesthood and had no portion of land assigned to them as the other tribes had. Certain cities and towns were assigned to them, and Jericho was one of the cities. Very naturally priests and Levites would be passing upon the road between Jerusalem and Jericho. The descendants of Levi, before they were consecrated to the priesthood, were called Levites.

Q. — What did a priest do?

A. — Luke x. 31.

Q. — What did a Levite do?

A. — Luke x. 32.

Q. — What did a Samaritan do when he passed that way?

A. — Luke x. 33, 34.

NOTE. Samaritans were especially hated by Jews. They would have no intercourse with them, even so much as giving a drink of water. But this Samaritan takes mercy upon an unfortunate Jew, dresses his wounds, gives him the use of his beast, pays the inn-keeper to entertain him, (about thirty cents,) and promised to pay any further expenses, if there should be any.

Q. — What question did Jesus now put to the lawyer?

A. — Luke x. 36.

Q. — What did the lawyer reply?

A. — Luke x. 37.

NOTE. It will be noticed that he carefully avoided using the word Samaritan.

Q. — What instruction did Jesus now give him?

A. — Luke x. 37.

The Jews interpreted the word neighbor to mean none but the Jews; but Jesus taught the lawyer the true, the heavenly meaning of the word.

Enigma.

My first is in Cyprus, where Paul God's word taught.
My second is in Ccrinth, where the tent-maker's wrought.
My third is in Jerusalem, where the wise men came.
My fourth is in Sapphira, who for falsehood was slain.
My fifth is in Mars hill, where Paul mads his defence.
My sixth is in Temple, a building immense.
My seventh is in Bethlehem, where Jesus was born.
My eighth is in Sabbath, when the disciples plucked corn.
My ninth is in Thomas, who doubted his Lord.
My whole is to Christians a loved, welcome word.

Ida T. Smith.

Answers.

DEC 30. "Love one anothor."

Wisdom; Israel; Nero; Temple; Esau; Rehoboam. Winter.

THE MYRTLE

IS PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY THE

UNIVERSALIST PUBLISHING HOUSE,

37 Cornhill, Boston.

BENTON SMITH, Agent.

TERMS—PAYMENT TO BE MADE IN ADVANCE.

Single copy, or less than ten, **75** cents per year.

Ten or more copies sent in one package, *without names*, to one address, **50** cents each per year.

PARTICULAR NOTICE.

The printed date upon each wrapper will show each subscriber how the account stands, and none need expect it continued beyond the term paid for.

In any case where money has been sent, and the date has not been changed to correspond, we will be glad to be notified, and the mistake will be corrected.

Address "Universalist Publishing House,"
37 Cornhill, Boston, Mass.